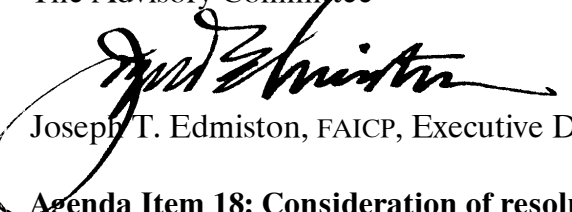


Memorandum

To : The Conservancy
The Advisory Committee

Date : April 24, 2006

From : 
Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Executive Director

Subject: **Agenda Item 18: Consideration of resolution authorizing a grant of Proposition 50 funds to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority for public access and interpretation of air, land, and water resources in the Ballona Wetlands portion of the Santa Monica Bay Watershed.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy adopt the following resolution authorizing a grant of Proposition 50 funds to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) for public access and interpretation of air, land, and water resources in the Ballona Wetlands portion of the Santa Monica Bay Watershed.

Legislative Authority: Section 33204(c) of Public Resources Code.

Background: The State of California has authorized expenditure of funds from the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water Coastal and Beach Protection Act of 2002 (Proposition 50) to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC), in Chapter 10, Sections 79570(d) and 79571, for purpose of promoting public access and conservation education of children from urban areas that lack access to natural areas.

On MRCA April 27, 2006 the State Coastal Conservancy will be considering a contract between the MRCA and the Coastal Conservancy to implement interim stewardship activities at the Ballona Wetlands. This contract for ranger services will enable MRCA rangers to enforce code violations on the state property, including illegal camping, dumping and illegal trails, and will fund approximately 16 hours a week of ranger time for a two year period.

Staff is recommending that the SMMC authorize a two year proposition 50 grant to the MRCA for a ranger program promoting safe public access and providing outdoor experiences and conservation education of children from urban areas that lack access to natural areas at the Ballona Wetlands. Community outreach and interpretive programming are part of the success of the MRCA ranger program. Tailored to the specifics of the site, this programming includes ranger reports at community meetings, junior ranger and youth activities, interpretive programs, restoration programs, and interpretive signage. This grant will enable the ranger program to spend the entirety of the Coastal Conservancy contract on law enforcement activities without compromising the variety of services and activities that make a ranger program successful. The proposal also includes a non-profit grant program to support and

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expand the efforts of non-profit organizations which currently provide programming at the Ballona Wetlands. The MRCA will focus on new programs or areas of the 600acre state property on which no programs exist.

The application submitted to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy is for \$158,000 a year for two years and focuses on two project areas, promoting safe public access and providing outdoor experiences and conservation education of children from urban areas that lack access to natural areas.

Budget over two years -

MRCA Ranger Program -

Public Access and Conservation education	150,000
Program Materials development and design	36,000
Printed materials	10,000
Signage	45,000
Non profit grants	50,000
Project oversight	25,000
Total	316,000

This grant is contingent upon approval by the Attorney General.